

North Smithfield Fire/Rescue Service, Inc.

Board of Directors Meeting

April 14, 2015

Called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Roll call of Voting Members:

Chairman: Paul Lefebvre (late arrival)

Vice-Chair: Kathleen Shatraw

Treasurer: Daniel O'Brien

Secretary: Brian VanHouwe

At-large: Pamela LaBarre, Paul Shatraw (absent), Kenneth Thompson

Non-voting member: Chief Joel Jillson

A motion to dispense with regular order of business to allow Department I.T. Private William Labarre to address the Board of Directors was made by Mr. VanHouwe, seconded by Ms. Shatraw. Voted and passed unanimously.

Pvt. Labarre talked about recent computer service changes with the expiration of the server maintenance/backup contract with Southern New England Computer Services (SNECS) and their subsequent renewal quote of \$7,200 (from \$600). Increase due to growth of company and insurance costs. Pvt. Labarre has been backing up computers and trouble shooting 24/7 at no cost to the department.

We have numerous more computers and an expanded system that includes dispatching and EMS billing software. (Chief Jillson reiterated importance of EMS component and how computer technology in all encompassing.) Pvt. Labarre received less than satisfactory treatment that he considered should be extended to an eight year customer. He researched area companies and solicited Fairoaks Consulting, Inc. of Milford, MA (see packet) with the result that they can provide more services at a higher price of \$8766 (buy server) or \$9366 (rent server). He recommended renting server. Mr. Thompson asked, "How many employees do they have?" He said that they can draw from national resources. Ms. Shatraw asked if they have worked with any other fire districts. No, we would be the first, but they stand by their priority of security/protection or he fixes for free. There would be less than one day of down time, and the portable server could be moved temporarily to another location like the Police Station. Fairoaks offers a three year contract with a 60-day notice of discontinuance. Mr. VanHouwe asked about the level of service from SNECS – minimal; and if we could get in on the School Department's system – possibly a resource but not feasible host. Mr. Thompson asked how other fire departments are set up for computer services – Chief Jillson says that they are not quite the same as us; he suggests that Mr. Labarre personally call the company's references to verify their experiences. Mr. O'Brien wants to get third quote for same service. Chief Jillson commends Mr. Labarre for his constant intervention without compensation as well as cost savings in many areas. Mr. VanHouwe is concerned about timely action. Mr.

Labarre will report back to the Chief quickly. (please see New Business) Mr. Labarre exits the meeting at 7:15. Further discussion follows. Ms. Shatraw asks if anyone else can fill in if Mr. Labarre is absent. Chief Jillson replies yes that we have a firefighter who works with him to learn the computer system. Regular order of business resumes at 7:25.

Secretary's Report:

Minutes of the March meeting as emailed had one correction from Mr. VanHouwe in the time that the meeting adjourned: should have been 7:41. The minutes were accepted as corrected with a motion by Mrs. LaBarre, seconded by Mr. VanHouwe. The motion passed unanimously. Financial Report: as submitted (see packet) by Mr. O'Brien reviewed and explained. Loss by year end is better than expected. Motion to accept the Financial Report by Mr. Thompson, seconded by Mr. VanHouwe. The motion passed unanimously.

Bills: (see attached). Mr. O'Brien suggested that we go out to bid for full service heating oil contract or see if we can ride other town department bid. Chief Jillson to follow-up. Mr. O'Brien motioned to approve the payment of bills, seconded by Ms. Shatraw. The motion passed unanimously.

Communications:

1. Request from RI Special Signal Association. Continued to New Business.

Fleet:

Chief Jillson: Many repairs lately. Apparatus Committee work ongoing. New Rescue due to arrive first week of June.

Facilities:

Chief Jillson: Station emergency generators serviced. Station boilers cleaned and serviced.

At some point, Station 1's roof will have to be addressed. Patch versus new roof, either flat or trussed. Discussion as to how to fund such costly capital improvement projects.

Old Business:

1. Conflict of Interest policy signed by each Board member and placed on file. Mr. VanHouwe voiced concerns on how said Policy would affect members of the Board, namely our Treasurer/Accountant. Mr. O'Brien excused himself from the meeting. Discussion followed citing opinions from expert witnesses that no conflict exists with Mr. O'Brien's duties as Accountant.

2. Ongoing research into investment strategy/advice: Mr. VanHouwe submitted WealthCare Investment Partners; Mr. O'Brien: Steve Lavergne; Mr. Thompson: recommended to cut the middle man, as Financial Advisors would charge about \$2,000/year, and go directly to a mutual fund. He recommends Vanguard (two options) as per the attached reports. He believes that investing funds in a low risk mutual fund will create funding for capital improvements in the future.

Chief Jillson suggested getting to said two Financial Advisors to give their spiel at the next meeting. Mr. VanHouwe thinks criteria questions need to be decided prior to their proposals. Initially decided: \$100,000, 5-7 years, moderate risk.

3. Promotional exams scheduled for May 28th and June 1st.

4. EMT re-certification ongoing.

5. Pvt. T. McCooey won the department weight-loss contest (29 lbs).

6. Contract negotiations, referred to Executive Session.

New Business:

Chief Jillson:

1. Hand dryers (6) ordered (see packet) for Station restrooms.

2. Fire Marshal's car in need of replacement. Town owned. Ms. Shatraw wants the Department to take ownership, with consensus of the Board. Mr. Lefebvre points out that it should be a 4-wheel drive vehicle. Mr. O'Brien suggested a used car might be more cost effective. Discussion resulting in the direction to Chief Jillson to have Fire Marshal and Deputy Chief shop around to get quotes for both new and used (\$20,000 range).

3. Motion by Ms. Shatraw to authorize Chief Jillson to select the vendor (not to exceed \$9500) after Mr. Labarre gets third quote and checks out references for Fair Oaks, then comes back with the IT company he's comfortable with and recommends. The motion seconded by Mrs. LaBarre, voted and passed unanimously.

4. Disposition of corporation "bequests". Tabled.

5. Special Signal Association "Canteen" fundraiser. Ms. Shatraw

**motions to donate \$200 to same, seconded by Mr. O'Brien.
Voted/Passed unanimously.**

Personnel: Nothing to report.

**Motion by Mr. O'Brien to move to Executive Session under RI General
Laws 42-46-5(a)(2) at 8:58 p.m., seconded by Ms. Shatraw.
Voted/Passed unanimously.**

**The next meeting is scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month,
May 12, 2015.**

**Motion to adjourn at 9:08 p.m. by Mr. VanHouwe, 2nd by Mr.
Thompson. All in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

(signed)

Rose Zariczny

**(Note: any "attachments" can be viewed by request during normal
business hours in the Office of the Chief, 1470 Providence Pike, North
Smithfield, RI)**